

The Competitive Development Group (CDG) Program was established in 1997 as a means to develop Army leaders with wide-ranging work and educational backgrounds. It was designed to broaden and reinforce leadership and management skills and to expand the acquisition experience of all its participants in a variety of fields. At this year's annual CDG Orientation, held Sept. 17-18, 2002, in Springfield, VA, and hosted by the Acquisition Support Center (ASC), 15 new members of Year Group (YG) 2003 were inducted into the program and 5 members of YG00 graduated from the program.



**Claude M.
Bolton Jr.**

Introduction

Maria Holmes, CDG Manager, opened the orientation by congratulating YG03 and welcoming others in attendance. She introduced Craig A. Spisak, Deputy Director of the ASC, who presented an overview of what the ASC does, its mission and roles, and an ASC perspective on what is expected of CDG members. He outlined the ASC's role of managing the acquisition workforce and the Acquisition Corps and how the ASC provides a headquarters-type support function for the program executive offices.

Understanding the organizational structure, Spisak said, will help CDG members be "ambassadors" for the program as they develop future careers and leadership positions in the acquisition workforce. One of the keys to the program, Spisak said, is networking. Spisak stressed that CDG members have the opportunity while doing jobs and rotational assignments to establish a good reputation for themselves, the CDG Program, and their organization. "Networking and this program go hand-in-hand," he added. He urged the CDG participants to use the resources at their disposal.

YG03 Inducted, YG00 Graduates . . .

ASC HOSTS COMPETITIVE DEVELOPMENT GROUP ORIENTATION

Sandra R. Marks

ASC Briefings

Spisak was followed by a presentation on personnel actions, travel, and permanent change of station (PCS) status. Carolyn Creamer, Human Relations Specialist, Personnel Management Division, ASC, addressed issues such as support provided by both the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and the Civilian Personnel Operations Center, the ASC's Table of Distribution and Allowances, requests for personnel

action, timekeeping procedures, locator cards, and awards. She identified all the documents that CDG members need to bring onboard. Sherry Strelow, Program Analyst, Resource Management (RM) Division, ASC, outlined the numerous roles that the RM Division plays as the ASC's accountant and financial advisor. She specifically covered how to prepare PCS orders and provided travel-processing information.

LaVerne Kidd, representing the Regional Acquisition Support Center Customer Service offices, identified the three regional offices and their directors. She discussed the roles and responsibilities of the regional acquisition support centers and outlined some of the regional programs currently being offered. "We're dedicated and committed to working with the Army system to ensure that our AL&T [acquisition, logistics, and technology] workforce members possess the technical leadership and managerial skills needed for future career development," Kidd said. Kidd also identified the key roles of the regional directors: to help establish and implement policy and to oversee career development for their regions. She concluded her remarks with a discussion of the roles of the Acquisition Career Management Advocates (ACMAs)—senior-level Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) members located throughout regional organizations, who have been appointed to be



Craig A. Spisak

Record Briefs (ACRBs), and the slating process.

Chandra Evans-Mitchell and Giselle Whitfield, both ACMs for the National Capital Region (NCR), gave presentations on ACM support—who the ACMs are and what they do. Evans-Mitchell reiterated how ACMs centrally manage CDG members by providing career counseling and guidance throughout their 3 years in the program and throughout their acquisition career. Whitfield concluded the briefing by walking CDG participants through the certification process and relaying key factors in becoming a successful CDG member.

Dinner Speaker

YG03 members and YG00 graduates were recognized for their participation in the program during a special recognition dinner. Claude M. Bolton Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASAALT) and Army Acquisition Executive (AAE), was the guest speaker. He applauded the inductees and graduates and focused his remarks on the Army transformation and how these future Army leaders will be influential in helping bring about change. It is important, Bolton said, that tomorrow's leaders embrace the concept of change. "Challenges are coming," Bolton added, "and people will be key to the success of the future Army."

Functional Representatives

The second day of the orientation began with 6 of 11 acquisition career field functional representatives providing comments as speakers for Functional Chief Representatives. On behalf of their specific organizations, they addressed the opportunities that CDG members have in those career fields. Tom Colangelo, Contracting Career Program Office, ASC, spoke about the contracting career field. He examined the difference between the old and

responsive to command-specific issues.

PERSCOM Briefings

LTC Peggy Carson, Chief of the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's (PERSCOM's) Acquisition Management Branch (AMB), presented an overview of what AMB does at PERSCOM and how it responds to its chain of command. Carson introduced the Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) who are assigned to PERSCOM. She focused her remarks on the board process and how AMB, from a broad standpoint, handles all selection boards for both military personnel and civilians. She also outlined the functions that AMB performs for both military personnel and civilians, urging CDG members to stay informed. She concluded by fielding questions on the board process, Acquisition Career



LTC Peggy Carson



Larry Hill

ing, and execution system (PPBES) processes.

Larry Hill, Director of the Integrated Logistics Support (ILS) Operations and Policy Directorate within the ASAALT ILS Office, discussed the acquisition logistics interface with other career fields and the Defense Acquisition University training required for certification in acquisition logistics and system sustainment management. Ned Kieloch, Deputy Director for Information Technology Management (ITM) Workforce Development, Office of the Army Chief Information Officer (CIO)/G-6, talked about the information technology (IT) career program and reasons why CDGs might want to pursue it and some educational, training, and developmental opportunities available through the Army leader development programs. Larry D. Leiby, Deputy Director for Test and Evaluation (T&E) Policy, U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Management Agency (TEMA), and a certifying official for T&E, concluded with an overview of the T&E acquisition career field, its structure within the Army, and the T&E process.

Panel Discussion

A panel of former CDG members convened to share their past experiences and to relate how the CDG Program has influenced their present careers. Maria Holmes, YG98, moderated the panel, which included Dave Bundy, YG00; Bernard Gajkowski, YG01; Steve Tkac, YG01; Jean Matlock, YG97; Deborah Chambers, YG01; and Ross Guckert, YG01. Panel members answered questions such as what advice do they have for new CDG members, what would they change in the CDG Program, how do they promote the program within their current organization, and which developmental assignments were most beneficial. Panel members were

very helpful in providing new CDG members insight into what they might expect. Gajkowski highly recommended leadership training he received at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, CA. Said he: "It's a great way to view the results of the outstanding work of the acquisition community and the positive feedback from the soldier about the acquisition community."

Personnel Demo

The orientation concluded with a training session on the DOD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration (AcqDemo) Project. Jerry Lee, a Senior Analyst with Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), and Jael Lathem, Analyst, SAIC, who both support the ASC relative to implementation of the AcqDemo project, discussed topics such as career paths and broadband levels, transitioning into and converting out of the AcqDemo Project, and the Contribution-based Compensation and Appraisal System (CCAS) evaluation standards. Throughout the presentation, Lee and Latham fielded questions from the YG03 members, many of whom were new to the concept.

Conclusion

In closing remarks, Holmes termed the orientation an outstanding success and wished CDG YG03 members the best in their future endeavors.

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new paradigms of the contracting field and described some of the developmental opportunities available throughout DOD.

Leon McCray, Associate Director, ITEC4, and a certifying official for manufacturing, production and quality assurance (MP&QA), advocated his career field as one that will expose the CDG participant to the entire acquisition spectrum—from input to the statement of work to industrial base management and disposal. Mort Anvari, U.S. Army Cost and Economic Analysis Center (CEAC) spoke about the field of cost analysis. Cost and economic analysis products and services, Anvari said, are essential and integral to the Army's financial management; decisionmaking; business management; and planning, programming, budget-